

Message Text

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15

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 IO-14 ISO-00 AID-20 CEA-02 CIAE-00 COME-00

EB-11 EA-11 FRB-02 INR-10 NEA-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01

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INFO AMEMBASSY BERN

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY LONDON

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AMEMBASSY VIENNA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, EEC XG

SUBJECT: CGT AND CGIL SEEK ETUC MEMBERSHIP

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REF: EC BRUSSELS 5665 (NOTAL)

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. ACCORDING TO THE OCTOBER 17 ISSUE OF THE AGENCE EUROPE BULLETIN, FRENCH CGT SECRETARY GENERAL GEORGES SEGUY HAS STATED THAT THE CGT AND THE ITALIAN CGIL ARE HOPEFUL OF ATTAINING MEMBERSHIP IN THE EUROPEAN TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION (ETUC). SEGUY REPORTEDLY MADE THE STATEMENT AT VARNA, BULGARIA AT THE CONGRESS OF THE WORLD FEDERATION OF TRADE UNIONS (WFTU).

2. IN RECENT WEEKS THE CGT-CGIL PERMANENT COMMITTEE TO THE EC IN BRUSSELS HAS APPEALED TO THE ETUC FOR CLOSER COOPERATION. THE QUESTION OF CGT AND CGIL AFFILIATION WITH THE ETUC HAS NOT BEEN AIRED PUBLICLY BUT HAS BEEN DISCUSSED AT ETUC EXECUTIVE COUNCIL AND SECRETARIAT LEVELS. WHILE THERE IS FORMIDABLE OPPOSITION WITHIN THE ETUC TO CGT MEMBERSHIP, A SEPARATE OVERTURE FROM THE CGIL ASKING FOR "ORGANIC COLLABORATION" HAS BEEN GIVEN FAVORABLE CONSIDERATION. END SUMMARY.

3. THE AGENCE EUROPE BULLETIN HAS REPORTED THAT ON OCTOBER 16 SEGUY ANNOUNCED IN VARNA THAT THE CGT, LIKE THE CGIL, ENVISAGES JOINING THE ETUC AND WANTS TO DISCUSS TERMS OF AFFILIATION WITH THAT ORGANIZATION. HE REPORTEDLY PRAISED FORMER BRITISH TUC GENERAL SECRETARY VICTOR FEATHER WHO WILL CONTINUE SERVING AS ETUC PRESIDENT UNTIL NEXT SPRING. ACCORDING TO EUROPE, SEGUY SAID THAT FEATHER HAD MENTIONED THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE ETUC MIGHT BE USED IN REGROUPING EUROPEAN TRADE UNIONS.

4. ACCORDING TO OUR ETUC CONTACTS THE CGT HAS NOT FORMALLY APPLIED FOR AFFILIATION OR APPROACHED THE ETUC INDIRECTLY. THE POSSIBILITY OF CGT MEMBERSHIP IN THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE IS CONSIDERED REMOTE BY OUR CONTACTS BECAUSE OF FIERCE OPPOSITION FROM THE FRENCH FORCE OUVRIERE (FO). EVEN IN THE AREA OF INFORMAL COOPERATION ON EC MATTERS THE ETUC HAS SHOWN RELUCTANCE TO DEAL WITH THE CGT PRIMARILY IN DEFERENCE TO FO LEADERS. DURING AN OCTOBER 2 MEETING OF THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SOCIAL PARTNERS WITH EC COMMISSION VICE PRESIDENT HILLERY, ETUC REPRESENTATIVES WERE FORCED BY CIRCUMSTANCES TO CONSULT WITH THE CGT-CGIL PERMANENT COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVE IN DEVISING JOINT TRADE UNION POSITIONS BUT THE ETUC CONTINUES TO ESCHEW FORMAL CONSULTATIONS.

5. PREPARATORY TO A SECOND MEETING OF THE SOCIAL PARTNERS WITH HILLERY ON OCTOBER 16 THE ETUC CON-

SULTED WITH THE WCL (CHRISTIAN) REPRESENTATIVES IN DRAFTING TRADE UNION PROPOSALS FOR THE EC SOCIAL ACTION PROGRAM BUT CONTACT WITH CGT-CGIL REPRESENTATIVES WAS LIMITED TO SENDING THEM A COPY OF THE DRAFT. THIS WAS DESPITE A MUCH PUBLICIZED APPEAL FROM THE CGT-CGIL PERMANENT COMMITTEE ON SEPTEMBER 27 CALLING FOR CLOSER COOPERATION BETWEEN THEM AND THE ETUC ON EC MATTERS.

6. THE PROSPECTS FOR EVENTUAL CGIL MEMBERSHIP IN THE ETUC ARE NOT CONSIDERED NEARLY AS BLEAK. IN FACT THE RECENT CGIL APPROACH TO THE ETUC PROPOSING AN EXCHANGE OF VIEWS (REFTEL) WAS FAVORABLY RECEIVED BY THE ETUC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE. IT HAS DESIGNATED A COMMITTEE CONSISTING OF FEATHER, ETUC GENERAL SECRETARY RASSCHAERT AND BRUNO STORTI OF ITALY'S CISL TO MEET WITH CGIL LEADER LAMA IN THE NEAR FUTURE. A DATE FOR THE MEETING HAS NOT BEEN SET.

7. COMMENT. IT WOULD APPEAR THAT ETUC RELATIONS WITH THE CGIL ARE EVOLVING IN A MUTUALLY SATISFACTORY MANNER WHILE RELATIONS WITH THE CGT HAVE BEEN RELEGATED TO DEEP FREEZE STATUS BY FRENCH FO RESISTANCE. WHILE SOME ETUC LEADERS PRIVATELY EXPRESS CHAGRIN WITH THE FO'S OPPOSITION, WE TEND TO BELIEVE IT IS NOT ENTIRELY UNWELCOME. IN FACT THEY MAY EVEN CONSIDER IT A CONVENIENT PRETEXT FOR DELAYING DECISIONS ON THE QUESTION OF COMMUNIST UNION AFFILIATION WITH THE ETUC IN THE CAT AND MOUSE AMBIENT WHICH HAS EVOLVED SINCE AN EAST-WEST TRADE UNION MEETING AT GENEVA IN JANUARY 1974 BECAME A CERTAINTY. IN ANY EVENT, SERIOUS CONSIDERATION OF CGT AND/OR CGIL MEMBERSHIP IN THE ETUC WILL PROBABLY HAVE TO AWAIT A FINAL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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DECISION ON THE PROJECTED AFFILIATION OF INDIVIDUAL WCL UNIONS WITH THE ETUC. DESPITE CONSTANT DELAYS, THIS CONTINUES TO BE VIEWED AS IMMINENT IN BOTH WCL AND ETUC CIRCLES. ETUC AND EO/WCL LEADERS WILL MEET ON NOVEMBER 6 TO DISCUSS THE TERMS OF AFFILIATION AND TO RESOLVE SOME REMAINING ORGANIZATIONAL DIFFERENCES WHICH ARE NOT CONSIDERED MAJOR OBSTACLES TO ETUC AFFILIATION BY EO/WCL MEMBER UNIONS. GREENWALD

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